

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 COME-00 EB-08
LAB-04 SIL-01 /063 W
-----131017Z 052049 /17

O R 130915Z APR 77
FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5870
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL DURBAN POUCH

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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, SA, US
SUBJECT: US SUBSIDIARY KELLOGG ACCUSED OF VICTIMIZING TRADE
UNIONISTS

1. ACCORDING TO A FRONT PAGE ARTICLE IN THE APRIL 13
EDITION OF SOUTH AFRICA'S LARGEST SELLING (CIRCULATION
130,000) BLACK AUDIENCE DAILY NEWSPAPER THE WORLD,
SEVERAL WORKERS AT THE SPRINGS PLANT OF READY TO EAT
CEREAL MANUFACTURER KELLOGG COMPANY OF SOUTH AFRICA
(A SUBSIDIARY OF KELLOGG COMPANY OF BATTLE CREEK,
MICHIGAN) HAVE BEEN FIRED BECAUSE OF THEIR TRADE UNION
ACTIVITIES.

2. THE FOLLOWING IS THE FULL TEXT OF THE WORLD REPORT:
QUOTE: FOUR BLACK WORKERS CLAIMED YESTERDAY THAT THEY
WERE VICTIMISED AND FINALLY DIMISSED BY AN EAST RAND
CEREAL MANUFACTURING COMPANY BECAUSE OF THEIR TRADE
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UNION ACTIVITIES.
THE FOUR, WHO WERE EMPLOYED BY THE KELLOG COMPANY, CLAIMED
THAT THEY HAD BEEN VICTIMISED BY THE COMPANY'S WHITE
SUPERVISOR SINCE LAST SEPTEMBER, WHEN THEY BECAME
MEMBERS OF THE SWEET, FOOD AND ALLIED WORKERS
UNION.

THE WORKERS ARE MRS. JANE LEKHULENI (29), WHO WAS A SHOP STEWARD; MR PANKIE MASHAPA (33), A R43.50C-A-WEEK "CREW LEADER" ON THE PACKING LINE; MISS SELINA SKHOSANA (23), A R16.60-A-WEEK SACKER ATTENDANT; AND MR VICTOR TSHABALAL (29), A QUALITY CONTROLLER.

SAID MRS LEKHULENI: "I WAS DISMISSED ON DECEMBER 21 LAST YEAR. MY PROBLEMS STARTED IN JANUARY LAST YEAR WHEN I AND A NUMBER OF MY COLLEAGUES VOTED FOR A WORKS COMMITTEE IN THE FACTORY".

THE FOUR WORKERS AGREED THAT THERE WAS TROUBLE WITH A NUMBER OF WHITE SUPERVISORS AFTER THE MAJORITY OF WORKERS IN THE COMPANY, AFTER A NUMBER OF ELECTIONS, VOTED FOR A WORKS COMMITTEE AND NOT A LIAISON COMMITTEE.

MR MASHAPA SAID: "IN DECEMBER LAST A WHITE SUPERVISOR WANTED TO KNOW WHY I HAD JOINED A UNION. WHEN I SAID I HAD JOINED THE UNION FOR MY PROTECTION HE SAID I WOULD BE DISMISSED FOR THAT".

HE CLAIMED THAT THE WHITE SUPERVISOR HAD TOLD HIM ON MARCH 4 THIS YEAR THAT HE WAS TO WORK ON ANOTHER MACHINE. HIS REFUSAL WAS USED AS AN EXCUSE TO DISMISS HIM, HE SAID.

MR D.A. WOOD, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF KELLOG, SAID THERE WAS NO TRUTH IN ALLEGATIONS THAT THE WORKERS HAD BEEN DISMISSED FOR THEIR TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES.

THE WHOLE THING HAS DISTURBED ME. I AM TRYING TO MEET THE UNION'S SECRETARY MR. LEONARD SIKHAKHANE, BUT I LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CAN SAY NOW THAT OUR COMPANY HAS NEVER RESTRICTED WORKERS FROM JOINING A TRADE UNION", MR WOOD SAID.

MR WOOD SAID HE WOULD NOT COMMENT FURTHER ON THE WORKERS' ALLEGATIONS UNTIL HE HAD MET MR SIKHAKHANE, WHICH HE EXPECTED TO DO TODAY. END QUOTE.

3. ACTION: SUBJECT ARTICLE DOES NOT MENTION FACT THAT KELLOGG IS A US SUBSIDIARY. IN VIEW OF THE POSSIBILITY THAT FURTHER PRESS COVERAGE WILL VERY LIKELY MAKE THIS ASSOCIATION, SUGGEST DEPARTMENT ADVISE US PARENT ASAP. REGIONAL LABOR OFFICER IS IN MEANTIME REQUESTING MEETING WITH MANAGING DIRECTOR WOOD.
KIRBY

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